

Siddha Marg



धर्म अर्थ काम मोक्ष

The philosophy of yoga says we have four ideals in a human life: dharma, artha, kāma, and mokṣa.

We first have to understand dharma: what should I be doing, what sustains me in life? This takes some clarification, wisdom.

As we come to understand dharma, we also earn money, or wealth (artha). This isn't just about making money; it's about using our wealth for a higher purpose.

If our desires (kāma) sustain goodness and are uplifting, then as we satisfy them, we can be aware that the purpose of our life is liberation (mokṣa), becoming free of the cycle of birth and death.

MAHĀMANDALESHWAR SWAMI NITYĀNANDA

The purpose of Siddha Marg is to share the eternal teachings, sanātān dharma. Formal talks, study, conversations, questions and answers, kirtan, meditation, and silence are some of the methods used by Gurudev, Mahāmandaleshwar Swami Nityānanda Saraswatī, to share his ruminations on and expression of the universal philosophy. This issue features excerpts from a talk he gave in an Intensive in Rosario, Argentina, in May 2018.

You Are Blessed

With great respect and love, I would like to welcome you all to our Intensive here this morning. Take a moment to quiet your mind, to make yourself even more still.

Our topic this morning is Śiva *dr̥ṣṭi*, the vision of Śiva.

We want our mind to have the awareness of that vision, to be able to see the Absolute. We want that as we hear these teachings, we're able to understand and bring ourselves to that vision. So slow down your mind. Allow your thoughts to quieten. Bring yourself to absolute stillness. The only way you will understand is if you allow yourself to sit here with expanded awareness. Put logic aside. Don't try to reason with what you hear this morning. Simply go into your heart and try to see how you can bring this awareness into your life.

I'll begin with the story of a saint. In the Indian tradition, we have a celestial sage named Nārada. As he is traveling around the Earth, he spends a night with a couple. The couple have no children, so they ask him to bless them with a child.

Nārada goes to the Lord and puts forth their request.

The Lord looks at their karma, and tells Nārada that it is not possible for them to have children in this lifetime.

Nārada returns to the Earth and tells the couple, "The Lord says in this lifetime, due to your karma, it is not possible for you to have children."

The couple accept this and go about their life.

You Are Blessed (continued)

One day, a saint comes to their house and spends the night with them. The next morning, as he is leaving, he blesses them. That blessing bears fruit, and they have children.

Some years later, Nārada visits them again, and he sees the children in the house. He asks the couple, “Whose children are these?”

The man says, “They are ours.”

Nārada asks, “How did that come about?”

The man says, “A saint visited us, and he blessed us. This is the fruit of his blessing.”

Nārada is rather upset. He goes back to the Lord and says, “When I asked you to grant that couple children, you told me it was not in their karma to have children. But now they have children!”

The Lord laughs and says, “That must be the work of a saint.”

Baba Muktānanda would tell us that the mind cannot understand the touch of a saint, the magic a saint performs in each of our lives.

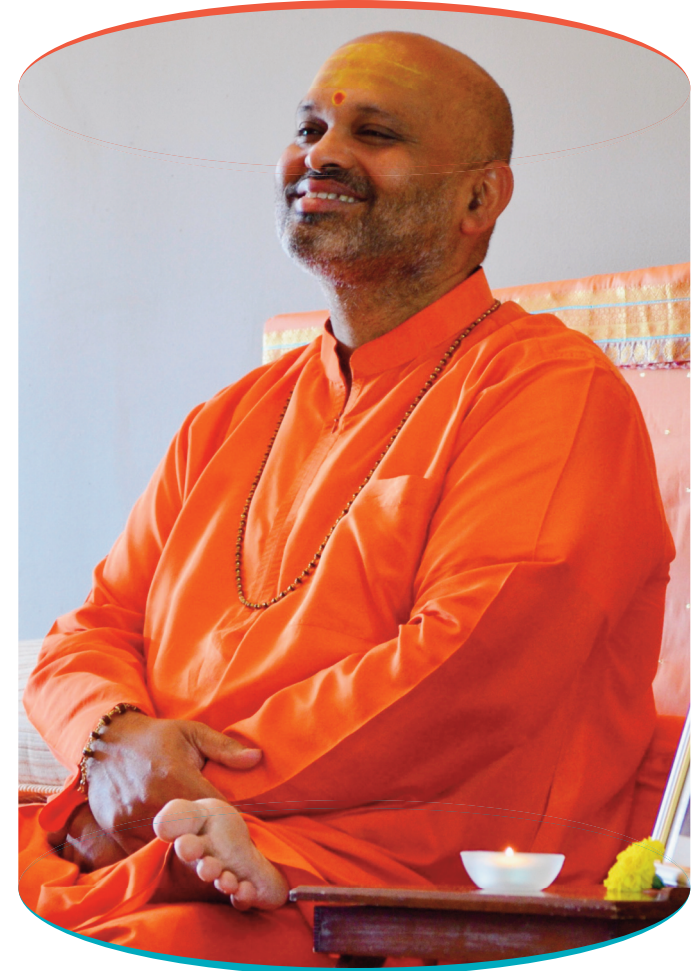
Just as the couple were blessed with children, each one of us is blessed in our own way. All we need to do is be open and allow our mind and our heart to receive the grace and the blessings that come our way.

Ultimately, words themselves are not so important. The original scriptural texts from India were written in Sanskrit. Very few people today know Sanskrit. Baba wrote down his thought process in Hindi, and that Hindi was translated into English. Today I am speaking to you in English, telling you how I understand the teachings. You will hear the translation in Spanish, according to the translator’s understanding. She

is Mexican, and you will hear her words in your Argentinian way. We have Sanskrit, we have Hindi, we have English, we have me, we have the translator, and we have you. So we have six levels of language before the teachings can even penetrate!



The mind cannot understand the touch of a saint, the magic a saint performs in each of our lives.



The Outlook of Śiva

To regard all that happens as the embodiment of Śiva is to have the outlook of Śiva.

The teaching of Śiva dr̥ṣṭi, the outlook of Śiva, comes from the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism. In *Secret of the Siddhas*, Baba Mukṭānanda talks about how we can have this outlook.

In this world, we experience two kinds of objects: that which is sentient, and that which is insentient. To put it another way, there is matter, and then there are conscious beings. In all of this, we want to experience Śiva. To regard all that happens as the embodiment of Śiva is to have the outlook of Śiva.

At different times, different beings have shared with us this outlook. They have tried to express to us that the Absolute is everywhere. Baba says we have to wear the glasses of that outlook, and then we can see things in that way. The mind has to come to the experience of the Absolute.

However, our mindset, our experience, is limited by time, by space, by circumstances. Before we can understand that the universe is the embodiment of Śiva, we must first understand these limitations.

We are bound by time. By time, I mean whatever has happened in our life in the past, whatever is happening now in the present, and whatever we imagine might or can or should or could happen in the future.

We are bound by space. In our own mind, we can only see what is in the space around us. We aren't aware of what is happening outside this room.

And we are bound by circumstances. We believe that all circumstances are created by me.

In the experience of Śiva, of the Absolute—which is perfect, which is complete, which is omnipotent—these limitations do not exist. Śiva is extremely independent, not bound by time, space, and circumstances. Śiva is the embodiment of Consciousness.

Śiva has created this world through his *icchā-śakti*, which is his will, and his *kriyā-śakti*, which is his action.

Now, each one of us also has our own *icchā-śakti*, which is our individual will. And each one of us has *kriyā-śakti*, which is our power of action. But we use our *icchā* and our *kriyā* in limited ways. We live our lives the way we do, but the sage is asking us to expand our awareness.

In the scriptures, there is a story. In it, there is a meeting of all the celestial beings, and the Lord of Death also arrives at this meeting. As he walks in, he sees a bird up in a tree.

The King of Birds sees the Lord of Death looking at that bird. The King of Birds thinks, “I should protect this bird from the Lord of Death.” So he sends the bird far away.

Of course, the bird dies when it reaches that place.

The King of Birds asks the Lord of Death, “Why did you look at that bird?”

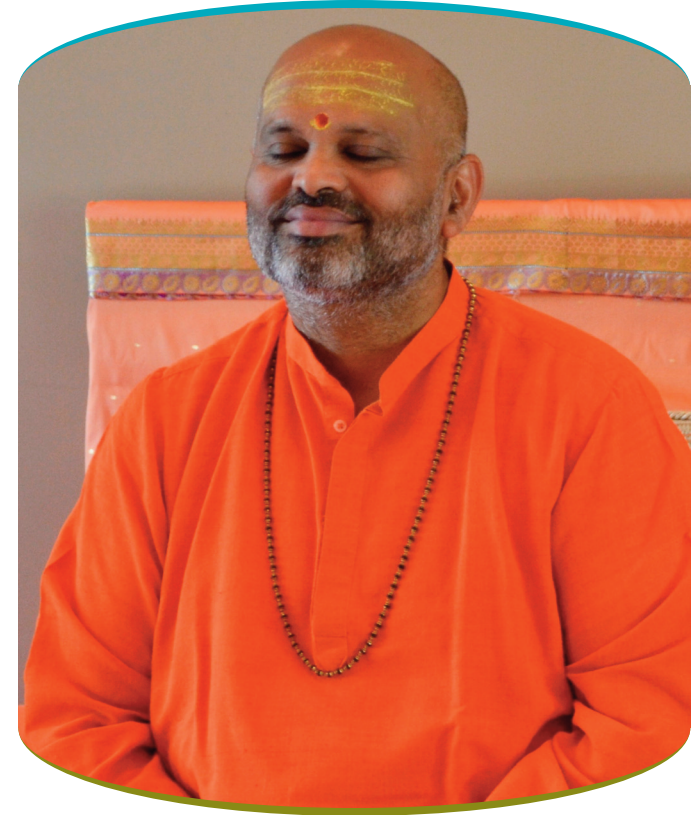
The Outlook of Śiva (continued)

The Lord of Death says, “Well, my records showed that that bird had to be at that particular place. When I saw it here, I wondered how its death would take place there, when it was here. But thanks to you, he was diverted to the right place for his death.”

A sage is not limited by time and space. But our mind is limited by these things. So we want to ask ourselves, “How can I become free of these things?” Intellectually, you may understand a teaching. But that’s not enough. In the midst of the experience of life, you have to think about how you can achieve it.



**The mind has to come
to the experience of
the Absolute.**



I Am That

When you allow devotion to be awakened within you, you begin to recognize Śiva everywhere.

The philosophy of Shaivism says we have to remind ourselves that Śiva pervades equally in all forms, and is formless, as well. When the understanding develops within us that the universe is not different from Śiva, we begin to see Śiva everywhere.

The sages tell us to contemplate, “I am the Absolute.”

As we sit today to meditate, as we breathe in and out, the mind can become aware of the mantra *Haṁsa*. As we breathe in, we breathe in the awareness “I am.” As we breathe out, we breathe out the awareness “That.”

As much as you think you have to remind yourself, “I am That,” ultimately you simply have to sit in the awareness of *Haṁsa*, “I am That.” “That” is your real nature, and because it is your real nature, you simply have to become aware of it. You don’t have to tell yourself, “I am That. I am That. I am That.”

The awareness you have developed—“I am a man.” “I am a woman.” “I am a boy.” “I am a girl.”—is just one or another identification related to the external body. When you go beyond this physical body, you come to the realization, “I am Śiva” or “I am Śakti.”

The sages tell us Śiva and Śakti are not different from each other. In truth, Śiva and Shakti are one. Through Śakti, Śiva controls the activities of this universe.

Right now, you think, “I’m thinking.” You think, “I’m going to do.” You think, “I understand.” However, when you come

to the awareness of Śiva, of the Absolute, and sit in that awareness, then you see that your will is really Śiva’s will, your action is really Śiva’s action, your knowledge is really Śiva’s knowledge. With the outlook of Śiva, you see that your *icchā* and *kriyā* and *jñāna* (knowledge) all belong to Śiva.

The sages tell us to offer everything to the Absolute at all times. They tell us not to think, “I am the doer.”

When we get caught in the thought process of “I need to be acknowledged for what I do,” our struggle in life becomes all about recognition. The sages say that idiots only talk about what they will do. They say egoistical people boast about what they have done. But a sage simply does whatever he does, and doesn’t say anything about it.

You can ask yourself: which of these three categories do I fall into? Do I only talk about what I will do? Do I boast about what I have done? Or do I simply do what needs to be done, and not worry about it?

In your humility, you have to come to the experience of Śiva. When you allow devotion to be awakened within you, you begin to recognize Śiva everywhere.



A Natural Practice

The Guru brings us to
the recognition of the
Absolute.

There is a story about St. Augustine. He tries for a long time to understand divinity. He studies a lot and he searches a lot, but he finds nothing.

One night, he has a dream. In the dream, he is walking along the seashore, and he sees a small child sitting near the water. The child has a small cup, and he seems troubled.

Augustine goes close to the child and asks, “What’s the matter?”

The child explains that he is trying to scoop up the ocean inside his cup.

Augustine laughs and says, “My child, the ocean will never fit inside a cup!”

The child looks at Augustine and says, “How is what I’m trying to do different from what you’re trying to do? You want to scoop God into your little cup.”

As Augustine is thinking about this, the child says, “Let me show you how it can be done.” And the child throws the cup into the ocean.

Augustine immediately got it. He saw that he had to allow himself to merge into the Absolute.

Each of us has to understand this teaching about the Absolute in this manner. Bound by time, bound by space, bound by circumstance, we cannot understand that great outlook. We cannot understand that expanded awareness. We have to let go of all of these limitations.

They say a child recognizes its parents, and it is natural for a child to do so. In the same way, through scriptural truth, the Guru brings us to the recognition of the Absolute.

In truth, there is nothing we have to do except bring ourselves to the understanding that the means of attainment, the goal that is attained, the attainment, the one who attains, the one who enjoys, that which is enjoyed—all is the Absolute.

Think for a moment, “Who is meditating? What am I meditating upon? Who is performing the act of meditation?” When you slowly dissolve all of these differences or dualities, you come to the understanding that all of it is Śiva.

The *Yoga Vāsishtha* says, “The world is as you see it.” What is this world? According to this teaching, this entire world is Śiva.

Hopefully by the end of the day today, at least some portion of your mind will come to this experience.

I find that because they don’t understand this teaching, some seekers make a joke out of it; they make fun of it. When the mind makes it a joke, this outlook doesn’t become a natural practice.

Let’s try to understand and actually experience this outlook of Śiva. Yes, it happens over time. Yet we have to constantly remind ourselves. The more we remind ourselves, the more frequent that experience becomes.

Shaivism says we have to have firm conviction. The mind cannot doubt. The mind cannot wander. And as I just said now, we can’t take the teaching lightly. If you want

A Natural Practice (continued)

to attain this outlook, that will only happen if you make it your natural state.

The Guru's touch, the Guru's word, the Guru's mantra, and the *sādhana* given by the Guru all lead to this outlook. The Shaivite scriptures tell us to practice *sādhana* with the following awareness: "I am a form of Śiva. I will attain Śiva. By becoming him, I will attain him. And because I am Śiva, I will attain Śivahood very easily."

Now, you have to think of the young boy who throws the cup into the ocean. Each of us is the cup, is the body. Instead of trying to find Śiva in your limited sense, allow yourself to throw this limitation into the ocean, which is Śiva.

The scripture continues, "Although I appear to be different, I am one with Śiva. The entire universe is the activity of Śiva. Śiva experiences everything. It is essential to know Śiva. Being Śiva, I will attain Śiva. Śiva is the experiencer and what is being experienced. While remaining Śiva, I will attain Śiva. Śiva is the doer, Śiva is the action. Even though I am involved with all my senses, I am Śiva."

In this way, we become established in the awareness of Śiva. A mature seeker, through constantly reminding himself or herself, becomes one with Śiva. This is the essence of Śiva *dr̥ṣṭi*.

Our mind flutters like a butterfly. In contrast, the steadiness of a *siddha*, who has the vision of oneness, reminds us of the possibility of stillness. That stillness can erupt within you, and suddenly you are stunned by the shift in your own mind. For a moment, you experience freedom.

When you receive *śaktipat* from the Guru, it propels you into the stillness of your own mind, where you are enthralled by Consciousness itself. This is the gift a *siddha* gives us, which the *siddha* has received from his or her own Guru. The disciple who receives this gift discovers that he or she is equally conscious, equally as great as the Guru.

What an ignorant person creates is different from what another ignorant person creates, because each individual's creation depends on his or her understanding. But once we come to know the Truth, the entire world appears as the embodiment of Śiva.

We simply have to allow ourselves to give way and allow grace to bring us to the outlook of Śiva. Then, when we come to that state, there is no subject, there is no object. There is simply the blissful, supreme Śiva. We have the recognition that Śiva, the Absolute, manifests in all of these innumerable forms of multiplicity.



**A mature seeker,
through constantly
reminding himself or
herself, becomes one
with Śiva.**

G L O S S A R Y

dr̥ṣṭi

vision

Hamṣa

mantra; literally, "I am That"

icchā-śakti

power of will

jñāna

knowledge

Kashmir Shaivism

philosophy based on the idea that all is

Consciousness

kriyā-śakti

the power to make manifest

Nārada

divine sage

sādhana

spiritual practices

Śakti

the Goddess

śaktipat

transmission of śakti by the Guru

siddha

perfected master

Śiva

Hindu deity, the primordial Guru

Yoga Vāsiṣṭha

scripture narrating dialogue between

Rāma and sage Vāsiṣṭha

